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ANALYSES, &c.

I.—*Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh ; with Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad ; and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis.* By the late Claudius James Rich, Esq., the Hon. East India Company's Resident at Bagdad. 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 808. London, 1836.

Of the numerous MSS. left by the highly-gifted and intelligent individual whose too early death every friend of Oriental literature and geographical research must deplore, none seems to claim a higher interest than the subject of the work before us, as it describes a country almost unknown to Europeans, and one which, were we well acquainted with it, would throw great light on ancient as well as modern geography. Who can read of Nineveh, of Arbela, and of Koordistan the country of the Carduchii, without recalling the Assyrian monarch—the haughty conqueror of Darius—the retreat of Xenophon and his brave ten thousand—and the striking events of which these spots were once the scene of action?

But our task is with the more modern territory of Koordistan, and seldom has it fallen to our lot to peruse a more accurate and graphic description of a little-known country—related with all the simplicity of a diary, and devoid of any high colouring or picturesque descriptions, which too often are used but to varnish over the absence of real information.

Mr. Rich was for twelve years British Resident at Bagdad, where he occupied the leisure hours he enjoyed from his public duties in making a collection for a history, and for a geographical and statistical account of the Pashalik.

"In 1820, the state of his health requiring change of air, he made a tour into Koordistan. He afterwards went to Shirauz, whence he visited the ruins of Persepolis, the tomb of Cyrus, and the other remains of antiquity in that neighbourhood. While at Shirauz, the cholera morbus appeared in the city, to which disease Mr. Rich fell a victim on the 5th of October, 1821.

"Of the pages of which we propose to give an analysis, it is not necessary to say much : they speak for themselves. They contain the journal of an eminent man in a new country, for so it may be called, in spite of the scattered notices to be found in the journals of travellers who passed casually and hastily through different parts of it.

They place the geography of Koordistan, and the manners of the inhabitants, in a new and strong light. The geographical fixed points now ascertained, will assist in rectifying the position not only of the different parts of Koordistan itself, but of the adjoining provinces in that portion of Asia."

April 16, 1820, Mr. Rich and his party left Bagdad; travelling in a north direction as far as Tchubook, on the river Diala, and continued along its banks as far as the pass of the Hamreen hills, named Sakal Toutan; thence to Kifri, situated just at the pass into Koordistan; here were found extensive ruins, probably Sassanian, both to the south-east and south-west of the town.

"The easternmost branch of the Kifri hills (which is, in fact, the main trunk or artery), passes by Kerkook, and Altoon Kiupri, thence runs off below Arbil to the Tigris, and is there called the Karatchukdagh. This eastern branch contains gypsum and naphtha. The Western, or Matara hills, are pure sandstone and gravel, and resemble in every respect the Hamreen chain most completely. They offer many circumstances worthy of note. On entering them in the pass of Jumeila, we rode through a ridge or two of perfectly vertical strata, looking as if they had been forced up into their present position.

"By means of a good observation I had at night, I have now been able to satisfy myself as to the true position of Kerkook, which, from my former journals, and those of Sir R. Ker Porter, I had long been persuaded was placed too far westward by our maps. I find I was right in the position I had assigned it. Lat. $35^{\circ} 27'$ N., Long. $44^{\circ} 27'$ E.

"Behind Derbent rises the mountain of Peer Omar Goodroon, forming part of a higher range, to all appearance bare and rocky. Goodroon is the highest mountain in these parts, and is said to contain a glacier, which supplies all Koordistan with snow, or rather ice, the store of which is inexhaustible, and never melts. We perceived snow in some of the clefts.

"I will now endeavour to give some general idea of this part of the Koordish ranges of mountains, as they appeared from the mount of Tchemtchamal.

"The line which we see immediately before us, extending from N. to S.E., is a narrow precipitous bare ridge, which is called the Bazian mountains. To the north of the pass of Derbent i Bazian, which, as I have already remarked, is just before us, the mountains soon make a turn towards the west, where they form the mountains called Khalkhalan, which bound the Pashalik of Keuy Sanjak on the south. To the south of the pass of Derbent, the ridge is continued in a straight line south and a little east. Here is another pass called Derbent i Basterra; beyond which the ridge, continuing in the same line, assumes the name of Karadagh, and becomes well wooded. Here is the third road into Koordistan from the plains of Assyria. It is called the Seghirmeh, or ladder, and passing directly over the crest of the mountain, has been esteemed difficult, if not impossible, for an army.

"The pass of Derbent is formed by a mere ridge, or wall, which advances as it were to close the valley, and slopes down very gradually, leaving but a small opening. This is a complete screen, facing the two sides of the opening through which the road to Koordistan leads.

"The ordinary houses at Sulimania are mere mud hovels, which makes the place look like a large Arab village; they are perfectly exposed, but the people do not seem to regard this, the women going about with the men, and performing their domestic labours without any veil. This miserable-looking town, however, contains five khans, two good mosques, and a very fine bath. The population of Sulimania is estimated by the best judges among the Koords at ten thousand souls, including the officers of government and retainers of princes residing here. The ordinary citizens are of the peasant race.

"The Koords are the only orientals I ever knew who sit up late at night, and rise late in the morning. Few gentlemen in Sulimania go to bed till two or three o'clock, or show themselves abroad till nine or ten in the forenoon. Their chief visiting time is at night. When it grows dark they begin going about to each other's houses, where they amuse themselves with conversation, smoking, and music. They will pay two or three visits of this kind in the course of a night. About an hour before sunset also, a kind of club or assembly is held before the house of the Masraf, in an open place in the town called the Meidan. Friends meet and chat on various subjects; arms or horses are displayed; and sometimes matches are made of wrestling, partridge or dog-fights. The Koords appear to me to be a remarkably cheerful social people, with no kind of pride or ceremony among them; and they are neither envious of one another, nor have I ever heard a Koord speak an ill-natured word of another, however different they may be in party or interest.

"The timber in Koordistan, which is tchinar, or oriental plane, of a fine damasked grain, is cut on the mountains which separate Sinna from Turkish Koordistan, principally in the districts of Juauroo and Delli Havar, which is a valley in the mountains of Hallabjee. Forests are public property in the East; but the neighbouring chiefs generally contrive to exact something, in the way of presents, from the speculator, by throwing all kinds of dangers and obstacles in his way. The wood is cut, cleaned, and left to dry. A year or two after, at the time of the rising of the waters, it is carried to the nearest station, where it is floated down to the river Diala—men attending on the banks to see that it takes the proper course. When it reaches the Diala it is left to its fate, and floats down to the bridge between Bagdad and Taus Kesra, where it is taken out by persons on the watch, but of course a great deal of it is lost in this way; however, so dear is timber in Bagdad, that it is generally sure to make a handsome profit. Mulberry and nut is also cut in Koordistan, but these are purchased out of gardens. Poplar or kawak is brought from Jezira and Amadia; and willow, or sughuit, from the Euphrates above Ana.

"The town of Sulimania is situated in a hollow, about two miles from the foot of the east range of hills, the *débris* of which slope

down to it; and among these in a sort of ravine it is built. The neighbouring hills are steep and bare; in height they may be about 300 yards. They serve as a reflector to the rays of the sun, which strikes upon them from about seven in the morning until sunset all the summer; and the wind rushing down the face of these hills carries its heat thus acquired to the town, when it blows from the east and north-east. About east of the town the hills recede a little, and the south-east wind is not so bad, consequently, as the north-east, which is the worst point of all.

"July 17.—We left Sulimania, after a residence of two months, at twenty minutes before four o'clock in the morning, and took the Giozheh road, as being the easiest through which to pass the chain, or rather wall, of bare hills, which bounds Sulimania on the east. The Giozheh is the most southern of the passes that lead directly over this wall. Next to it, on the north, is the Azmir road, which goes to the city, or rather site of the old city of Karatcholan; and farther north is another called the Gavian road.

"We reached the hills at an opening corresponding with the *col* or eastern head of the glen on our right. Hence Goodroon bore N. 60° W., and from this situation I could form a pretty good notion of the skeleton of that part of the country. The Giozheh, or Azmir, terminates on the north. Goodroon begins before or south of the termination of Azmir, the valley or dell of Margapa being between them. The Goodroon then forms a range more considerable and more rocky than Azmir, which it sends off in a north-easterly direction. We now descended by a very steep road, and kept winding in a *gorge* of the mountains, which were steep on either hand, but that on the right was most considerable. The road continually ascended and descended, and was sometimes intersected by valleys. The sides of the hills were covered with vineyards, some of which, in very elevated situations, seemed almost perpendicular, and could certainly only be cultivated by men suspended by cords like samphire gatherers. The principal cultivation hereabouts is the vine and tobacco. We passed some corn which was not yet got in. Dwarf oaks everywhere abounded; and by the little streams in the valley, willows often intervened with the wild vine. None of the grapes were yet near maturity.

"We soon began a very steep ascent, I think the highest and steepest I had yet seen; but the road was excellent. We attained the summit at six, the ascent having occupied about forty minutes; for half an hour of which it seemed, as we toiled up, to be almost perpendicular. Hence the Kazhav bore due west and old Goodroon reared its bare rocky head, in N. 65 W., above all the other mountains. We immediately began to descend by a beautiful and excellent road, among a thick forest of oaks, through which it ran in a zigzag direction, and was not so steep as the ascent. From the top we had a fine view of the plain, winding among beautifully-shaped hills covered with dwarf oak, the background being formed by the high mountains of Persia, whose outline was also extremely picturesque.

Along the plain meandered the river of Kizzeljee, which afterwards runs through a vale on our left, and taking a northerly course, goes through the district of Siwel to discharge itself into the Kiupri Soo. Its source is at the foot of the Persian mountains.

"There is a green frog in Koordistan which climbs trees, and catches flies and locusts like a cat, by striking out with its fore paw. I have often seen it perform this feat. It is in every respect like the common frog, but is of an apple-green colour and smooth skin. I have seen them roosting in bushes at night.

"Keeping the mountains we had just crossed on our right, we arrived at half-past seven at Beestan; which is a village of about fifty houses at the foot of these hills, and curiously thrust in, not in the most advantageous situation, under the foot of an insulated rock, about two hundred feet in height, which cuts it off from the vale through which the river flows, and renders its position close and warm.

"*August 13.*—We left Beestan at five o'clock this morning, and riding through the plain of Tattan or Beestan, crossed the hills which surround it, and descended into the plain before Ahmed Kulwan, or the plain of the Kizzeljee river.

"Penjween, where we take up our quarters for a few days, is a large village, beautifully situated in a glen in the hills, on the south side of the plain of the Kizzeljee river. From this place our old station at Ahmed Kulwan bears about N. 55 W., distant one hour's good pace of a horseman. The old castle of Kizzeljee N. 45 W.

"The peasantry of Penjween look well and comfortable, which is rare in these parts. Their houses are separated by wattled enclosures, and have a neater appearance than I have seen in other parts of Koordistan.

"*August 20.*—The necessary cattle for the transport of the sepoys, the sick, and the baggage having arrived, I resolved on setting out on my trip to Sinna, in which I have for my object the re-establishment of my health, the visiting the chain of Zagros, with its hitherto unknown pass of Garran, and the fixing the position of the capital of Persian Koordistan.

"At six a.m. we entered Persia; the frontier of which is marked by a little wooden bridge over a small rivulet which falls into the Kizzeljee, but is frequently dry. The Kizzeljee river soon after disappeared to the right, behind the hills that now separate the plain, which turns more south.

"On ascending a little eminence at half-past seven, we saw the small but clear blue lake of Zeribar: in the background to the south were the wild rocky mountains of Avroman, through which there are only foot-paths. The left side of the lake was mountainous and wooded. The right side was a plain, evidently at no very distant period occupied by the lake, which has now shrunk to about three miles in length by two in breadth.

"The bare precipices of Avroman bear due south of us, and extend westward, overlooking Shehrizoor; whose plains are separated from

us by the hills which come down from Ahmed Kulwan to Penjween and the lake. Between Avroman and Zagros is a narrow valley, through which runs a direct road to Kermanshah from Sulimania, called the Shamian road. Through this valley flows a little river which comes down from Garran, and falls into the Diala. The chain of Zagros is bare and high. It is visible at intervals from Surena and Ardbaba, which I am now satisfied are part of Zagros. Hajee Ahmed, that part of Zagros to which the Jafs retire in summer, lies from hence N. 60 E. Zagros seems to incline easterly from Ardbaba, in the district of Banna, to Garran, and thence to come out more westerly, in the direction of our road to-morrow.

“ *August 22.*—We were off by five, and proceeded through a hilly but open country till six, when we came to the entrance of a narrow valley, formed by two stupendous cliffs, which reared their bare heads above the oak woods that cover their declivities. The small river of Aserabad or Garran flows through the pass, and is crossed by a neat bridge of three arches, built by Aman ullah Khan, the present Vali of Sinna. We had been rising very gently ever since we left the village, but now we began to ascend sensibly, keeping the Aserabad on our left for about a mile. It flows into the Diala. Our direction to the bridge was N. 70 W.,* thence S. 70 E.; the road extremely beautiful, through woods of oak, ash, wild-pear, vine, and tchinar or oriental plane, which cover the hills almost to their summits; and among them we remarked hawthorn and a gigantic wild-rose.

“ This pass of Zagros is called Garran, from the name of a peer, or saint, as I am informed, though it is certainly no Mahometan name. The pass of Ardbaba to Banna is reckoned easier. This entrance into Persia is by no means pleasing; every thing looks burnt and bare; and there is said to be no more wood eastward to the frontiers of India.

“ Sinna wore a much more imposing appearance than I expected, with its castellated palace on a height, and some good-looking buildings round the foot of it. When we came near the town, we turned off to the right to the garden of the Khosrooabad, which is less than a quarter of a mile to the south-west of the town, and is situated on a slope that runs from the foot of a pretty high hill down to the town. At a distance it looked like a plantation of poplars, the garden having no other wall or defence than this tree very closely planted all round it.

“ Sinna,† which was formerly situated on a flat mount, south of the present town, was built one hundred and seventy-five years ago, by an ancestor of Aman ullah Khan’s. It now contains about four or five thousand families. There are two hundred families of Jews, and fifty houses of the Chaldean Catholic rite, dependent on the Patriarch of Diarbekir, and in the diocese of Mousul. They have a church and a priest, and are all tradesmen or merchants in a very small way. The Mahometan inhabitants of the town are all Sunnis of the Shafei

* This should be N. 70° E.—ED.

† The proper name of Sinna is Sinendrij—Sinna is a colloquial abbreviation.

sect. The Vali and his family affect to be Shiyyahs, in order to please the King of Persia.

"Aman Ullah Khan, the Vali of Sinna, is forty-seven years of age, and is said to be a perfect master of Persian politeness, elegance, and policy. The Persians themselves say he can outwit any of them; and all agree that his cunning and duplicity set all precautions at defiance. His manners are represented to be so insinuating, and his *tact* so perfect, that he can gain whomsoever he pleases; but he has always a selfish object in what he does, and no reliance can be placed on him. He is cruel and avaricious even beyond the generality of Persian governors.

"*August 30.*—Quitted Sinna. Immediately after leaving the town we rose, and continued gently ascending all the march. The country was open and tolerably well cultivated. The tops of the hills were broken and craggy; sometimes so much so as to look like ruins. On the sides of the hill we still observed slate and gypsum. Many of the crags seemed strongly tinged with iron. Some of the stones were greenish with micaceous particles.

"*Sept. 1.*—We reached a very steep descent to the Kizzel Ozan, a river of some geographical celebrity.* The source is about two farsahks off to the left or west, in the Abbas Bey mountains. It runs east, and goes hence to Meiandoav. I viewed the stream with the interest with which one sees all great or celebrated rivers in their infant state. There was not above a foot of water in it; but this is extraordinary, and proceeds from the uncommon drought of the season. It is generally up to the stirrups, and frequently unfordable for days together in the spring. The Vali proposes to build a bridge over it.

"At a quarter to twelve, without having ascended considerably, we reached the top of a very steep descent, I think the steepest we had yet met with; it occupied about half an hour, and is called Kelleh Balin. Both Omar Aga and Abdullah Bey agreed in saying it was a pass of Zagros, 30 miles north of our former pass. The two mountains here form a valley which reaches to Banna. Both are wooded with the dwarf oak.

"*Sept. 7.*—The castle, or palace of Banna, or whatever it may be called, is a wretched-looking place. The Khan, or Vale of Sinna was sitting in an unplastered talar, surrounded by a quantity of melons. He rose to receive me, and gave his hand to Mr. Bell and myself. I was much disappointed in his manners and appearance. I had expected to see the dignity and refinement of Daoud Pasha; instead of which I found a plain, rough kind of Persian, and rather an oddity—something of what we should call a good fellow, with no dignity, and nothing remarkable in his conversation, which consisted entirely of abrupt questions and short remarks. In person he is above the middle size, has rather a short thick face, grizy beard, and bushy black eyebrows, which, being straight and contracted, gave rather an unpleasing character to the upper part of his face.

* The Kizzel Ozan is supposed by Major Rennell to be the Gozan of the Scriptures. See 2 Kings xvii. 6.

" We left Banna on our road to Sulimania, and crossing the plain in a north-west direction, entered a narrow valley, the hills above which were wooded with dwarf oak.

" We soon reached the top of the descent by which we entered the Bebbeh territory. Here a magnificent sight presented itself. The road led at once down into a deep and narrow valley which the eye could not fathom; on the opposite side, the country rose again to a height even greater than that on which we stood, and was crowned by two summits, united by a curtain, the northern of which was a singularly-shaped hill, which we had noticed from Swearwea. The aspect of the country was enchanting. It was richly wooded, with many villages and patches of cultivation, as verdant as an emerald, in the most picturesque situations. The lines and forms of the mountains were broken in the most beautiful manner.

" Certainly, nothing could be more marked than the difference between *our* Koordistan and Persia viewed from this spot. The very soil seemed to have changed its nature and tint—everything was a mixture of the grand and beautiful. We arrived at the bottom of the descent at half-past twelve, and crossed the Berrozeh or Banna water, which is joined here by other mountain streams. This stream separates Persia from Turkey. It runs north and a little west, and falls into the Altoon Soo above the Karatcholan water.

" This spot is called Hazir Kanian, or the thousand springs. We had here attained the highest part of our road; but still, at a considerable height above us, were Gimmo and its fellow summit, both bare and stony. We continued for some time travelling under them. No road could have been better chosen to give me a correct notion of the chains and connexions of the mountains. Parallel with us was the Soorkeeo range, which, as I suspected, forms the Kizzeljee or Tariler mountain. It sends forth a branch, which sweeps round from the Serseer mountain, and then joins or forms that on which we now are. Behind, or south of this, is the Kurree Kazhay, running about south-east towards the Tariler. The country between is composed of broken hills, ascending to either range respectively. Villages and verdant patches on platforms, and sometimes as it were suspended on the sides of the mountain, diversify the scene.

" Sept. 15.—Returned to Sulimania. I have now inspected a most curious and interesting part of Koordistan; scarcely any point of which was known previous to my visit, and which is not likely to be soon visited again by any traveller. And the routes I pursued, which often depended on mere accident, or the impulse of the moment, fortunately always turned out to be the best for giving me a general idea of the country, and the very ones I should have chosen to survey it, had I previously known enough to form a general plan of proceedings."—vol. i. pp. 42—267.

" Oct. 21.—We again left Sulimania, after a second residence of six weeks, for Mousoul. We retraced our steps as far as the pass of Derbent, and pursued a west-north-west course towards Altoon Kiupri. Shortly after we quitted Koordistan, and continued over a

far less fertile country. As we approached the lesser Zab, or the Altoon Soo, we passed near a fine-corn plain, and descended to the river over immense beds of pebbles, the beds and rocks of the river being concretions of pebbles also. The town is not seen till you descend upon it. . . . We passed over the very sharp high bridge which has been lately repaired, and then through the town and over the other bridge, and encamped on the flat space near the north-west or right quarter.

"The Tigris is eighteen hours' travelling from Altoon Kiupri, and when the river is very full a kellek or raft will go in a day, but at this season of the year it takes three days.

"A little below Kiupri, on the right bank, are some wharfs and store-houses for grain, &c. Here the kelleks or rafts from Keuy Sanjiak unload, and those for Bagdad are made up. The river is *floatable* for kelleks from Keuy Sanjiak to the Tigris. The river just above the town is about a mile broad, but runs off into two arms, which join below, both equally considerable, and leaving the town on an island. Many houses are commonly carried away in the spring. The town then is completely washed by the river, both arms joining round it. On the side of the great bridge the river is confined by a strong bank of concrete pebbles till about the height of the bridge, where the high bank retreats about a quarter of a mile and slopes up gently. On the north side is a low plain, sandy and pebbly, confined by broken hills at about the distance of a mile. This space has evidently at times been filled by the river up to the hills. The Kybeer hills, with flat tops and broken sides, run round our left, and are said to terminate in the Koordish province of Shemamik; and behind these hills, in the direction where the river passes through them, is Karatchuk.

"On the following day we came in sight of Arbil, bearing N. 10° E.; soon after which I took a sketch of it, the view of the high flat mount, probably the burial-place of the Arsacidæ, crowned by a castle, and backed by the Carduchian mountains, being really very impressive.

"Arbil was once evidently very large, probably about the size of modern Bagdad. It is situated at the foot of the artificial mount, principally on the south side, and contains a bath, caravanserais, and bazaars. Some portion of the town is situated on the mount, or what is called the Castle. On the east, or a little north of the town, is a hollow, called the Valley of Tchkunem, where it is said Tamerlane's tent was pitched when he besieged Arbil. A holy Sheikh of Arbil struck a panic into his army, which began to disperse; and Tamerlane is reported to have cried out in Persian, 'Tchekunem?' that is, 'What shall I do?' and this gave name to the valley or hollow.

"The artificial mount on which the castle of Arbil stands is, I conjecture, about one hundred and fifty feet high, and three or four hundred yards in diameter. It was once doubtless much higher, and it is probable the summit of it was ruined by Caracalla.

"Oct. 29.—Left Arbil for Mousoul. The mountains seem here to

retire and form a bay eastward ; they then advance again about the Zab to the westward. I now can distinguish several chains.

" At eleven o'clock we reached the village of Kellek on the pebbly banks of the Zab. At the place where we crossed it, the stream was, at its narrowest, not above four hundred feet over, but about two or three fathoms and a half deep. The current was very rapid, running at the rate of about two or three knots ; the water beautifully transparent, and of a sky-blue colour. In spring it often spreads itself over the whole plain. On the cliff at the passage is the Yezid village of Eski Kellek, where we halted for the night.

" There are four fords in the river between this village and the mouth of the Zab at Kushaff, on the Tigris, which is about five hours off.

" The country between the two rivers, the Zab and the Bumadus, is of an undulating surface, but not broken nor abrupt."

After six weeks spent in examining the ruins of Nineveh, Mr. Rich visited the convent of Syrian Christians, called Mar Mattei, situated 25 miles to the north-east of Mousoul, in the hilly country near the junction of two tributaries of the Ghazir Soo. This convent is perched on a remarkably precipitous hill, and has the appearance of a baron's castle of the 14th century. It seems to have been founded by Mar Mattei, a companion of St. George, A.D. 334. The incumbent in 1821 was an old bishop, assisted by one monk and a young priest. The view from the summit is extensive and beautiful.

" From the terrace of the south tower where we are lodged, we have a noble and extended view, comprising the whole of Alexander's operations from the passage of the Tigris, to the arrival at Arbela, after the battle of Gaugamela. The Bumadus meanders at the foot or southern extremity of this mountain, and I am now told it rises just below Amadia. I can trace the Zab plainly."

From hence Mr. Rich travelled in a north-north-west direction to the convent of Rabban Hormuzd, at about thirty miles north of Mousoul, and to the Chaldean town of Al Kosh, the birth-place and also the burial-place of the prophet Nahum the El-kosh-ite.

" The town of Al Kosh, which is entirely inhabited by Chaldeans, was before us, a little way up the foot of the mountain ; and on the right of it, about a mile higher up, in a rocky defile or opening in the mountains, was the Chaldean convent of Rabban Hormuzd, whither we were journeying, and which from this spot wore a most imposing appearance. Nothing was clearly distinguishable but a heavy square building of a dusky red colour, hanging quite over a precipice, like some Lama pagoda. The dark clouds rolled over the summit of the mountain almost down to the convent, and greatly increased the gloominess of its aspect and its apparent height. We seemed to be retreating from the world and entering on some wild and untried state

of existence, when we found ourselves in the rocky strait by which it is approached. The situation appeared to be well chosen for devotion, but devotion of a savage and gloomy character. The hills gradually rose very soon after the slope had terminated. An immense torrent, now dry, had brought down prodigious fragments of rock. Keeping along its edge, we reached at eleven the entrance of the defile, along a rocky and rough road. This defile expands and scoops out the mountain into a kind of wild amphitheatre, in which, not half way up, the convent is situated. It was only the latter part of the road which was very steep. The red building we had seen from afar was part of a church, or rather churches, there being several together. All the amphitheatre, from the top to the bottom, is full of little caves and grottoes, those near the church and extending up the rock far above it being appropriated to the use of the monks, of whom there are fifty, but only four or five are priests. Each monk has a separate cell, and the communications between them are by little terraces. The rocks are craggy and broken, and of fine harmonious tints, being of freestone, of which the church is built. It is now undergoing a thorough repair in a very neat manner. It stands on a platform elevated from the precipice, but very little of the ancient fabric remains.

"In the afternoon I went to vespers. The congregation of rustic dark-looking monks, together with the gloominess and simplicity of the church, which is merely a narrow arched or vaulted room, with no light but what is admitted from the small dome, might well remind one of the solitude of St. Saba.

"Manuscripts are fast perishing in the East; and it is almost the duty of a traveller to rescue as many as he can from destruction. I sent Aga Minas to-day to hunt for books in the town of Alkosh, and he fortunately procured me a very valuable Chaldean manuscript of the New Testament,* in vellum, of the highest antiquity, and which was fast perishing.

"Dec. 25.—Returned to Mousoul.

"From Alkosh people go in seven days to Urmiah; namely, two to Amadia, two to Julamerk, three to Urmiah. From Julamerk to Kotchannes is one day's journey. The Urmiah road does not necessarily pass through Alkosh, but runs very near it. The territory of Amadia is full of Nestorians, Kotchennes† being the place of residence of their patriarch."

After a residence of four months on the site of Nineveh, Mr.

* The most valuable was one obtained at Telkeif, and now deposited in the British Museum, and perhaps the most ancient copy of the New Testament in the Syriac language now existing, having been written A.D. 768.—ED.

† Among the Koords are many tribes of Christians,—Armenians, Chaldeans, and Nestorians. They reside chiefly about Mousoul and Amadia, and in Armenia; a remarkable colony of Nestorians, as we are informed by the present British Envoy in Persia, is to be found in the almost inaccessible height around Mount Juwar, at the fork of the river Hakiari with the Greater Zab. They are described as brave, industrious, but rude and almost savage in their habits; admitting no strangers among them, and living under their own bishop, who resides at a monastery called Kotchannes, a sequestered valley of this mountainous country. It is a spot well worth notice.—ED.

Rich embarked on a raft of skins and branches of trees to descend the Tigris, on his return to Bagdad. On his way he surveyed the river very attentively, and in the appendix gives all the bearings, and distances, and observations. At the ruins of Nimrod he believes he found the Larissa of Xenophon. From Bagdad Mr. Rich went to Bushire, and thence, to escape the insufferably hot weather, he started on the 23rd July for Shirauz.

His description of the pass of Katal i Dokhter, the Simplon of Persia, which he crossed in his journey, will be read with interest:—

“ We proceeded along the plain, and after night-fall, turning to the mountains which bound it on the south, we stood under the black and frowning cliff of the Dokhter, which seemed to bar all further progress; yet up the face of this we were to ascend; how, it was impossible to say, at least by this light. We soon, however, found that an entirely artificial road zigzagged up the face of this perpendicular and gigantic wall. Imagine the Sarmashook, or perhaps something more, not to be crossed, but ascended up from the plain to the summit, and you will have some idea of the Katal i Dokhter; but far different are the roads. The Dokhter is a most skilfully constructed road, buttressed, levelled, and *parapetted*, so as not to alarm the most timid, and broad enough to allow of several mules abreast. It is in thorough repair, and is almost worth coming to see. It may be called the Simplon of Persia. The rocks must afford some fine scenery by day-light, and trees and shrubs in many parts project from the crevices, and overshadow the road. This is the first ascent, or screen of Zagros. After reaching the summit, we proceeded to the guard-house, or Derbent, where we arrived at twenty minutes to twelve; and here we stayed smoking our pipes and drinking coffee till twenty minutes past twelve. Near the top of the Dokhter I had a walk of a few minutes, as my mule went close to the parapet, and I was foolish enough to look down; when I saw the fire-pot of my calloon-bearer at a very great depth below, almost under my feet. This made my head turn, and I was obliged to dismount before I recovered. From the guard-house we descended by a very gentle slope and excellent road for a little way, into a longitudinal valley of Zagros, between the screen before mentioned, which bounds it on the west, and Peri i Zen, which is its east wall. The valley is narrow and well wooded, both in its area and sides, with oak, some of a very considerable size, and other trees which I could not distinguish. The country now became beautiful, and, as well as I could see, reminded me of my own Koordistan. This valley, which is called Desht i Ber, must be of a great elevation, and the night-air was so sharp as to make us long to be housed. After proceeding through it for about an hour at a good round pace, we began the ascent of Peri i Zen. The road does not zigzag much, nor are there any precipices; but the ascent is stony, and rises among woods of dwarf oak, hawthorn, and broom, of ten or twelve feet high. The more we ascended, Alps on Alps seemed to rise above us, and show we had yet much more to

perform. We met a caravan of Arabs, from the opposite coast, returning from a pilgrimage to Meshed. Continuing to ascend, we reached a caravanserai at three in the morning, and by the pleasure we felt on reaching it now, could estimate the value it must be of in December's snows. It is kept by a few soldiers, and we found an oak-wood fire burning, which was very agreeable. We were not yet half way up the mountain, the whole ascent of which is three hours without intermission.

"July 31.—We marched at ten minutes past six in the evening, continuing the ascent almost immediately, the area of the caravanserai itself being scarcely in a level place. As we advanced, new summits seemed still to rise above us, and the ascent appeared to be interminable. From near the top of the pass we saw the lake which terminates the valley of Kauzeroon ; and from some of the summits still far above our heads they say the sea is visible. After proceeding for some time along pretty level ground, we descended a little way through fine woods of oak, of gigantic hawthorn, and other shrubs, which gave out a fragrant odour, into the valley of Arjoon. It is of a fine oval form, and terminated on this side by a lake. It sparkled all round with the fires of the Eliauts, some of whom were Arab buffalo-feeders. Wild boars are in prodigious abundance.

"Our elevation in this plain, amid the summits of Zagros, must be very great, in which, however, no snow lies openly. Shirauz has been determined, by boiling water, to be 4500 feet ; and it is even *visibly* lower than this plain, and there is a manifest descent from hence to Shirauz the greater part of the way. I suppose this can hardly be less than 6000 feet. The plain is verdant as an emerald at this season. We marched at twenty minutes to six, and soon were engaged among the hills, through a beautiful road well wooded with hawthorn, wild cherry, pear, &c. Flocks of koorkoors, or partridges, were running across the road, scarcely deranging themselves for us, and we saw hares pricking up their ears under the bushes. Lions are said also not to be uncommon, and Mr. Tod heard one roaring the last time he passed this road."

On the 2nd Aug. Mr. Rich reached Shirauz : the impression this city made on him, and his account of the celebrated Jehan Numa, is described in a letter addressed to Mrs. Rich, then at Bombay for her health :—

"My expectations were surpassed in the general view of the town and the plain, and disappointed in the gardens. The town certainly presents itself to advantage, perhaps more so on the whole than almost any other Oriental town I have seen—of course excepting Constantinople. The plain is fine, well cultivated, and pretty green even now, but miserably bare of wood, and the mountains are rocky and barren. The gardens do not surround the town, nor are they by any means so numerous as I had expected. They are scattered here and there, and I have not seen anything that can be compared with the Khosroo-abad at Sinna.

"Our garden, the celebrated Jehan Numa, is one of the best here,

but the house, or bungalow, is in rather a ruinous condition. There is a fine terrace before it, and then a lower garden, much in the Italian style, but it is only two hundred yards square. The mere pleasure-part of the Khosroo-abad was eight hundred. Three or four walks are planted with cypress-trees, but with the exception of these and a few others scattered about here and there in some of the gardens, the cypresses for which Shirauz was once so celebrated have almost entirely disappeared. They have been unmercifully cut down for common carpentry, for doors and window frames, &c. The other day the prince wanted some timber to repair the roof of his kiosk in his garden, and cut down some remarkably fine tchinar trees, which had been much celebrated for their beauty in Kerim Khan's time. I have ordered a neat box to be made for you out of the Shirauz cypress wood, but the trees, however renowned in Oriental song, are not so fine as those of Constantinople."

His visit also to Persepolis,—

" Our first stage was to Zergoon, which we left in the evening of the 16th, and rode along the plain of Persepolis. It was dark when we left the bridge of the Araxes. My expectation was greatly excited. Chardin, when I was a mere child had inspired me with a great desire to see these ruins, and the desires excited in us in childhood are too vivid ever to be effaced. Their gratification has a relish which motives suggested by reason and judgment are unable afterwards to equal. My late antiquarian researches had, however, also added their interest to my other inducements ; and as I rode over the plain by the beautiful star-light, reflections innumerable on the great events that had happened there crowded on my memory. I was in the moment of enjoying what I had long wished for; and what a delightful moment that is ! At last the pointed summit began to detach itself from the line of mountains to which we were advancing. Mr. Tod pointed it out :—' Under that lie the ruins.' At that moment the moon rose with uncommon beauty behind it. Ages seemed at once to present themselves to my fancy.

" We were lodged in a half-ruined garden-house, fronting the ruins, and at the distance of about a mile from them. You may be assured that my last looks at night and first in the morning (I did not go to bed till twelve and rose with the dawn) were directed to that spot. Yet I took a capricious kind of pleasure in not going to them, and forcing myself to be contented with this general survey. This may be foolish, but I determined to put off my minute inspection of them till our return, and enjoy for the present the general impression caused by this distant view. Lord Byron would have employed the interval better than I could do.

" We returned to Persepolis by partly a different road, and arrived there on the evening of the 22nd. We pitched our tents on the platform, close by the portals, which contain the colossal figures of the mythological animals. You may imagine I could not sleep that night. It was not a situation to steep the senses in sweet oblivion. I

watched the rising of the moon, to indulge myself with a solitary ramble among the ruins by her light, so favourable to contemplation ; and I was well rewarded. The strange gigantic figures on the portals near which we were encamped, had a singular and portentous aspect, faintly illuminated by the moon, and by the remains of a fire our people had lighted, which cast a reddish mysterious light on part of them. As I walked among the lofty pillars, numberless were the fancies that arose, and the incomparable ode at once presented itself to my recollection. I was actually walking among the remains of those very ‘ Persian abodes,’ but how changed ! The fall of my own footsteps, and the cry of the fox from the hills which contain the royal sepulchres, were the only sounds heard, while above the pale moon was pursuing her tranquil course, unconscious of, or at least unchanged by, the lapse of ages.”

The dreadful irruption of cholera at Shirauz, in the midst of the nuptial feast of a royal pair,—

“ ‘ Who is it that comes from the bridal chamber ? It is Azrael, the Angel of Death.’ The festivities of the wedding were suddenly put a stop to by the appearance of the so-much-dreaded cholera. The first death by it happened on the 14th. * * * *

“ I hope to take Shapoor on my way to Bushire, for which I shall set out in a few days, please God.”

Such was not the will of God. His days were numbered. Mr. Rich died of the cholera morbus on the 5th Oct., 1821, at the early age of thirty-four years.

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Besides the journey here described, the Appendix contains a valuable collection of fragments of routes, of observations, and of bearings and distances throughout his routes ; affording most valuable materials for filling up the blank in our maps. In the maps accompanying the books, especially that on the large scale, Mr. Walker has made use of these materials with great judgment ; and we hope ere long to see the information, which bears on its face the stamp of veracity, transferred to all our maps of Koordistan.

II.—*Reise um die Erde in den Jahren, 1830, 31, und 32. Von Dr. F. J. F. Meyen. Berlin, 1834. (Voyage round the World in the years 1830, 31, and 32. By Dr. F. J. F. Meyen. Berlin, 1835.) 2 vols. 4to.*

THE author of this voyage, a zealous naturalist, accompanied as surgeon the Prussian vessel, Princess Louise, which sailed from Hamburg in September, 1830, for the west coast of South America, and for China, on commercial speculations. The vessel touched at Rio Janeiro ; Valparaiso and Copiapò in Chile ; Arica, Islay, and